

UNIT 21

Greek Oral Tradition

4 Days

Lesson 1 - Oral tradition - 1 Day
Lesson 2 - Greek Alphabet - 1 Day
Lesson 3 - Transliteration - 1 Day
Lesson 4 - Meter - 1 Day

Vocab	Terms
	Oral Tradition
	Bard
	Transliterate
	Meter
	Dactylic hexameter

Unit 21 - Greek Oral Tradition

Lesson 1 - Oral tradition

If you know some Classical Greek, you could use this as an extra unit to give the most advanced Prima Lingua students some exposure to how a language makes use of its sounds and rhythms in poetry and how oral traditions are a vital part of the history of many cultures.

Discuss

- A story is passed on by one generation telling it to the next.
- Many cultures have passed down their historical and religious beliefs orally.
- The Greek stories were not written but spoken, so there were no absolute set-in-stone versions.
- They relied on the memory of the story-teller, so each person might have added their own touches, and many versions of the story might have come to be.
- Recall the Whisper Down the Lane experiment.
- The Trojan War may have happened c. 1100 b.c.e. and was not written down until Homer c. 700 B.C., 400 years in which to go from historical fact to mythological wonders.
- The Greek storyteller, the bard, was often a blind man. His job was to preserve and pass on the stories of their culture. In this way he could serve his country by preserving its fame, since he could not serve in battle, being blind.
- How did the Greeks make use of their language in the oral tradition?

- the stories were spoken in meter with music from the lyre
- recall our two techniques for remembering numbers: poetry and song
- the meter and music would help the bard remember long passages
- they made use of sound groups in their language to communicate the meaning of certain passages
- using many guttural sounds would give the effect of harshness as in a battle scene
- using sibilant sounds, s"s, would convey seduction or stealth
- read the passages of the Sirens and Helios"s cattle in Greek for examples of this

Homework
pages 152

Terms
oral tradition
bard

Unit 21 - Greek Oral Tradition

Lesson 2 - Greek Alphabet

Activity

Write up the Greek alphabet letter by letter along with its name, allowing them time to practice writing and saying the sound of each letter.
This may take two days.

Homework
pages 153-154

Unit 21 - Greek Oral Tradition

Lesson 3 - Transliteration

Activity

Students pair up to transliterate the Greek words on p.155. These are all words which we have either borrowed in English or from which we have derivatives. They will recognize what the words are when they transliterate them.

Terms

transliterate

Unit 21 - Greek Oral Tradition

Lesson 4 - Meter

You could plan this class with the music teacher to talk about measures and beats.

Discuss

- Meter is the pattern of the rhythm of poetry.
- The meter of the Odyssey is dactylic hexameter.
- Derivation of hexameter = six measures
- Measures are also called feet in poetry.
- A dactyl is either a long beat followed by two shorts, or two long beats in one measure.
- Practice clapping these rhythms. Use p. 156.

Activity

- In the workbook pp.157-160 there is a passage of the Odyssey written in Greek.
- Give one line to each student to transliterate.
- Ask each student to find his line and to copy the meter and feet divisions above his transliterated line.
- Go around to each student to help him say his line in Greek in meter.
- After practice they can say their lines one after the other in order to recite the whole passage, and they can perform this for the school.

Homework
pages 157-160

Terms
meter
dactylic hexameter